

ROTOVUE

Serving Marine Corps Air Station New River and Jacksonville, N.C.

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Jan. 28, 2004

Vol. 43 No. 2

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Sgt. Juan Vara

FLIGHTLINES

Continuing Education

A Marine Corps College of Continuing Education mobile training team will conduct training here Feb. 5 at the Learning Resource Center in building AS-213 from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. and 1 - 3 p.m.

The workshop will provide training assistance on procedures required for training managers to effectively manage MarineNet (www.marinenet.usmc.mil) courseware in support of the unit's training requirements, administer and proctor electronic exams and procedures to maximize the support provided by the MarineNet Learning Management System. Unit training manager accounts and passwords will be provided as part of the workshop.

A MarineNet training manager account is available for every Reporting Unit Code (RUC)/Monitored Code Command (MCC). Training representatives from all RUCs/MCCs are encouraged to attend the workshop. Questions or concerns regarding this training should be directed to Maj. Terry L. Branstetter, CCEs courseware program officer, at (703) 432-0372 or e-mail branstetter@tecom.usmc.mil.

Anthrax Vaccine

Anthrax vaccinations in the Department of Defense resumed Jan. 7 after being put on hold at the direction of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel & Readiness, Dr. David Chu.

The program was put on hold Dec. 23 after the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia issued a stay of an injunction against the

anthrax vaccination program issued Dec. 22.

Throughout the process, the Anthrax Vaccine Immunization Program was never cancelled and troops are being vaccinated where they left off. No one will restart the vaccination series from the beginning. Anthrax vaccinations provide the best round-the-clock protection against a lethal biological weapon, and the Department of Defense is committed to protecting American troops.

Identification Theft

Everyone should keep a watch out for people standing near them at retail stores, restaurants, grocery stores, etc., who have a cell phone in hand. With the new camera cell phones, they can take a picture of credit cards, which gives them names, numbers and expiration dates. Identification theft is one of the fastest growing scams today, and this is just another example of the means that are being used.

Vangaurd Award

The Non-Commissioned Officers Association of the United States of America (NCOA) annually recognizes one noncommissioned or petty officer from each of the uniformed services for acts of heroism.

This recognition is made to honor those individuals who have performed a particularly heroic act that resulted in the saving of a life or the prevention of serious injury.

Selectees will receive the NCOA Military Vanguard Award named in memory and honor of a noncommissioned or petty officer recipient of

the Congressional Medal of Honor of their respective service.

Nominations must be submitted no later than April 1. Contact the senior enlisted Marine or Sailor in your unit for selection criteria and more information.

Valentine's Night

The "War Eagles" of Marine Aircraft Group-29, the Station Officers' Club and New River Marine Corps Community Services are hosting a Valentine's special night at the Station Officers' Club on Feb. 12.

Happy hour, hors d'oeuvres, DJ and karaoke are from 4 - 6 p.m. and the steak and seafood dinner with a complementary glass of wine begins at 6 p.m. The dinner costs \$20 per person and vegetarian meals can be requested. Reservations are required by Feb. 6.

For more information and to make a reservation call the Officers' Club at 449-6409 or email armelr@usmc-mccs.org.

The Child Development Center will be open for child care from 6 - 9 p.m. Call 449-6712 by Feb. 5.

Tax Center

The New River Tax Center is located in building AS-232 (sharing the parking lot with the post office, chapel, Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society, etc.). Hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. on Friday.

Unit appointments may be scheduled for Friday afternoon (alternate arrangements for deploying units may be available, as needed).

Bring W-2s, social security cards (for everyone listed

on the return), proof of deposit information and all other tax-related documents.

Call 449-7401 for more information.

Leftwich Trophy

The Leftwich Trophy for outstanding leadership is an award presented annually in memory of Lt. Col. William G. Leftwich, U.S. Marine Corps, killed in action in the republic of Vietnam in November 1970. MARAD-MIN 014/04 announces the 2003 Leftwich Trophy for outstanding leadership and solicits nominations from throughout the Marine Corps. A board will convene in March to review nominations and forward recommendations to the Commandant of the Marine Corps for final selection and announcement of the winner.

Among other criteria, nominees must be Marine captains in the ground combat arms serving on active duty as a company/battery commander with the ground forces of the operating forces in calendar year 2003. Actions included in each nomination must have occurred within calendar year 2003. Nominations must be submitted no later than March 1.

On the cover

Marines from Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-261 load equipment onto a CH-46E for transport to the USS Bataan. The squadron, accompanied by personnel from Marine Light/Attack Helicopter Squadron-167 and Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-26 deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 2 on Jan. 21.



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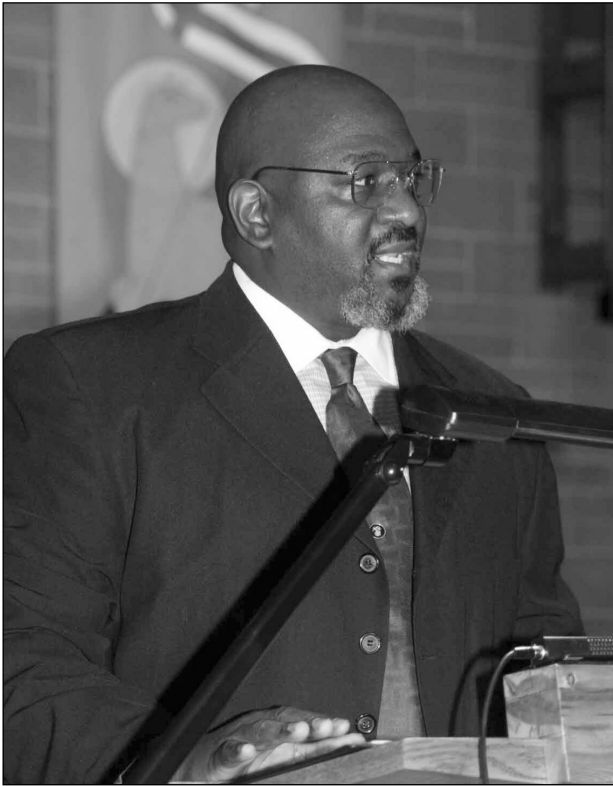
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If you have any comments or suggestions you may also contact the public affairs office at (910) 449-6196 or fax (910) 449-6478.

Station observes Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day



Sgt. Juan Vara

Retired Sgt. Maj. Keith Jones, former New River sergeant major, talks about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at a Station observance held at the chapel on Jan. 15.

Sgt. Juan Vara
correspondent

The Station Chapel held an observance service Jan. 15 to commemorate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The service featured retired Sgt. Maj. Keith Jones as the guest speaker.

Sgt. Maj. Leroy Williams, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-26 sergeant major, made opening remarks that took the more than 100 Marines, Sailors and family members in attendance for a walk down memory lane, talking about the memorable events in King's life.

Before the introduction of the guest speaker, Cpl. Tesha C. Gibbs, administrative clerk at Marine Medium Tiltrotor Training Squadron-204, sang the national anthem.

Lance Cpl. Deidre K. McLendon, administrative clerk at Marine Light/Attack Helicopter Squadron-167, sang The Negro's Anthem and many of the attendees joined her, transforming the chapel into a concert hall for a few minutes.

"While Lance Corporal McLendon was singing I could hear the echoes of Doctor King saying, 'Let freedom ring! Let freedom ring from one side of the ocean to the other!'" said Master Sgt. Albert E. Ashford, administrative chief at the Station Headquarters, who was the event's master of ceremonies.

During the introduction of the guest speaker,

Ashford talked briefly about Jones' tour in the Marine Corps, which lasted 30 years, and the audience welcomed him with a standing ovation.

Jones, New River's sergeant major before retiring, took the podium and talked about America being a Christian nation, founded on belief in God.

"Doctor Martin Luther King was 'the Reverend' Doctor Martin Luther King," said Jones. "In the 1960s, America was separated. God sent a prophet. He said, 'America, you need to come together.'"

"Why do you think terrorists hate you? They don't know you. How many here go shoot pool with a terrorist? They don't know you, but they hate you. They hate you for what you stand for ... Martin Luther King's dream was not his dream; it was America's dream. God said, 'America, I hear you. I'm sending you a prophet so you can understand.'"

After Jones' comments, Ashford presented him with a plaque as a token of appreciation for his contribution to the Station's observance of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

"I really liked the service," said Lance Cpl. Troy M. Gray, administrative clerk at the Headquarters Squadron of Marine Aircraft Group-26. "I learned more about Martin Luther King's family, and also that a day like this is not just for blacks, but for all Americans."

The service was organized by Staff Sgt. Mario R. Morales, Station equal opportunity advisor, and the Equal Opportunity Committee.

New River Tax Center opens doors

Cpl. Andrew W. Miller
correspondent

It's that time of year again: tax season. Some look forward to it as a bonus, while others see it as that dreaded time when they will be paying money to Uncle Sam. Whichever way you look at it, the Station Tax Center is here to help.

The Tax Center doors opened Jan. 15, at building AS-232, sharing the parking lot with the Station Chapel, Post Office, Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society and the Staff Non-commissioned Officer Wives' Thrift Store.

"The Tax Center is staffed by Internal Revenue Service certified tax specialists who will research and prepare all Federal and State personal income tax returns for New River personnel and their families," said Capt. David C. Cox, Station Tax Center officer-in-charge. "The Tax Center computer network is set up to electronically file all Federal and North Carolina

State returns. Other State forms will be prepared and printed as well, but some may not be available for electronic filing; they will have to be mailed instead."

According to Cox, this tax season will once again present tax issues that have emerged over the last couple of years due to the high rate of deployments.

"The establishment of tax-free pay while in designated combat zones, combined with the numerous forms of additional pay resulting from wartime deployments, will have a significant impact on servicemembers' tax returns and filing responsibilities. There have been numerous federal tax law changes over the past year that will also impact New River tax returns. The New River Tax Center is here to assist all New River personnel and their families in the accurate preparation of tax returns, ensuring compliance with all changes in the law, as well as ensuring that personnel receive the full advantage of authorized tax

benefits," explained the Newark, N.J., native.

The Tax Center is flexible and will accept both appointments and walk-in clients.

"If an individual has a complicated return that involves such issues as extensive mutual fund activity, investment distributions, rental properties, small businesses, or things of that nature, we will require that you make an appointment in order to assure that your tax preparation is handled by a more experienced tax specialist," said Sgt. William R. Gray, Tax Center staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge, native of Baltimore. "In addition, appointments will ensure that an appropriate amount of time is set aside for your tax preparation, thus saving you waiting time."

Unit appointments are also welcome, with special needs being catered to for those with upcoming deployments.

"Unit appointments allow us to stagger the number of Marines and

family members who are provided tax service. This equates to better service and less waiting time. It also allows the Tax Center to prioritize schedules for those units deploying as part of a Marine Expeditionary Unit or in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. A unit representative simply has to call our reception desk and provide the number of Marines requesting tax service and the requested appointment dates," explained two of the center's specialists, Lance Cpls. Travis H. Patterson, from Blacksburg, S.C., and Randall P. Waller, from Franklin, Tenn.

Before making a trip to prepare your taxes, make sure you take all the necessary documents with you.

"Most important are W-2s for all jobs held in 2003, and the Social Security cards for everyone who will appear on the tax return - spouses and dependents. But there are other important documents as well, to

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New River Marines get by with a little help from a friend

Sgt. Arthur Stone
correspondent

Marines from the Power Plants Division of Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-29 recently learned the value of a helping hand when a test cell failure forced them to travel to the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station in Elizabeth City, N.C.

The power plant mechanics here repair engines for the potent AH-1W Super Cobras flown by Marine Light/Attack Helicopter Squadron-269. They also support units at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Md., and Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas.

"The maintenance cycle can take as much as three months if we have to wait on parts," said power plant mechanic, Cpl. Jeremy Bowers of Calhoun, Ga. "If we have the parts here, it can be a two week turn-around."

The engines cannot be repaired and returned immediately to the unit. They have to be tested to ensure they are operating within proper specifications, according to Bowers. The mechanics use a testing facility, called a test cell, to power-up and run checks on the T700-GE-401 engines. Once repairs are complete, and everything checks out on the test cell, the power plants are returned to the owning unit. The Marines receive about four or five engines every month that need trouble-shooting, repair and testing.

"Any time we do any kind of repairs on an engine, we are required to test it, because we do the equivalent of overhauling the engine and disassembling it down to the bearings," said power plant mechanic, Sgt. Mark

Hoerber Jr. of Miami. "Everybody here is trained on every type of power plant maintenance. We don't have an assembly line. Everybody works together. We could repair the engines, but couldn't test anything."

"The test cell was down for about two and a half months due to a vibration problem," said section head, Staff Sgt. Przemyslaw Bracisiewicz, Chicago native originally from Busko, Poland. The other unit on station with a testing facility, MALS-26, was in the process of correlating their power plant test cell, according to Bracisiewicz. It is a process of verifying the torque system of the test cell with a "known" engine. This left units without a testing facility on the Air Station. The only option was to transport the engines to one of three air stations in Atlanta, Norfolk, Va., or Elizabeth City, N.C.

Since the USCG Air Station in Elizabeth City was closer, personnel at MALS-29 contacted the repair facility there and arranged to transport five T700-GE-401 engines to the facility for repair. Bracisiewicz traveled to Elizabeth City to look over the facility and determine whether the test cell there, for the more modern T700-GE-401C power plants, would be adequate to test their older engines. There he met the team of civil service workers who operate the Coast Guard's test cell at the station, the main repair and testing facility for the Coast Guard.

"I went up there two weeks prior to our departure with some of our equipment to make sure it would work on their test cell," said Bracisiewicz. "I had to make sure their software would let us test our engines, the '401' on a '401C' test cell."

Bracisiewicz returned to New River on Dec. 15. One of his Marines, Cpl. Timothy Sager, of Binghamton, N.Y., drove five of the T700-GE-401 engines up to Elizabeth City in a 15-ton truck.

"I didn't know what to expect when I got there, because I had never been to a Coast Guard station," said Bracisiewicz. "I'm thankful to the manager of the testing and repair facility, Acie Price, and his crew, for the assistance they gave us. They were friendly and helpful. We had a great welcome and they arranged everything. Anything we required, we had."



Sgt. Arthur Stone

T64 test cell operator, Sgt. Gustavo A. Ortiz, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-29, ensures everything is set up correctly prior to testing.

Airfield Operations train to keep edge

Cpl. Andrew W. Miller
correspondent

For forward deployed forces around the world, the aviation asset is a must for transporting troops, supplies and providing fire support. However, in order for the wing to accomplish its mission, it relies heavily on support units. Marine Wing Support Squadron-272 is the only support squadron aboard New River, and the Airfield Operations Division is the group of Marines who help make it happen in the field.

'Airfield Ops,' which is made up of four sections, (fuels, weather, aircraft rescue and fire fighting (ARFF), and expeditionary airfields (EAF), basically sets up and maintains forward arming and refueling points (FARPs) and bases, according to Sgt. Danilo A. McCabe, platoon sergeant for the fuels section.

The fuels Marines are in charge of refueling the aircraft.

"For a basic tactical airfield fuel

dispense system we have four refueling points manned by no less than seven Marines," explained McCabe, from Bronx, N.Y. "These Marines serve as pump operators, nozzle operators and one safety noncommissioned officer." Prior to conducting training in the field, these Marines have an extensive check-list to consider.

"First we must get our exercise approved by submitting an environmental impact statement. Then we must conduct a site survey to look over areas to be used for billeting, flightline, etc., so we can start planning for our assets, fuel and flight plan," McCabe said. "Finally we submit the movement order and set ourselves up at one of the many training areas here. On a daily basis we test the quality of the fuel for sediment and water so it is always ready to go."

Another important section of Airfield Operations is expeditionary airfields.

EAF's responsibility is to provide expeditionary airfield capabilities in

forward operating areas.

"This includes installation of lighting systems, infrared and AM2 matting, which is the sheets of aluminum matting used to create fully capable flightlines in the field, just to name a few," said Staff Sgt. Chad E. McCammon, EAF quality assurance chief of Rockledge, Fla. "Our capabilities allow us to operate in 12-man teams to make a runway anywhere from 10,000 feet, including parking spaces and fueling points, and on down to the size of a FARP."

According to Gunnery Sgt. Colen B. Laarman, EAF staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge and McBain, Mich., native, training and maintenance is a big portion of EAF's tasks.

"We conduct weekly training on laying the matting properly in the field, as well as maintaining and operating day-to-day the two outlying fields on Camp Lejeune," he said.

Safety is always an issue when dealing with fuel and the mechanics of an operating unit in the field. The

Marines of aircraft rescue and fire fighting stay busy assigned to the Station's Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron. Here, they help with the Station's daily needs to maintain proficiency, and go back to MWSS-272 for field operations or deployments.

"My Marines train in emergency equipment, fire training at the burn pits, hazardous materials, emergency medical technician training (EMT) and train with the P-19 fire truck," said Chief Warrant Officer Howard E. Heflin, officer-in-charge and native of Salt Lake City. "The main two missions of these approximately 54 Marines is the protection of life and the protection of property."

In the field, the concentration would be placed upon fire protection for the airfield and helicopters, and structured fire protection for the tent camps.

The last section making up Airfield

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include the paperwork for education expenses, name changes, charitable contributions, mortgage or bank interest [1099s], investments, child support and daycare provider employer identification numbers (EIN) or social security numbers," explained Lance Cpl. Brett J. Worthington, tax specialist and Mansville, N.Y., native.

"All of these documents are necessary to accurately report tax data to the Internal Revenue Service and to prevent a completed return from being rejected due to incorrect personal information," said Lance Cpl. Isaac G. Jasso, tax specialist, and Houston native.

The rush immediately following the distribution of W-2s will be hectic, so be patient.

"The Tax Center is here to support all New River military personnel and their families, as well as retirees," said Lance Cpl. Nicole I. Gauthier, tax specialist and native of Oxford, Mich. "Our ultimate goal is to provide each client with efficient, accurate and timely tax service."

The Tax Center's normal hours of operation will be from 8:30 a.m. until 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 8:30 until 11:30 a.m. on Friday. Beginning Feb. 16, the daily closing time will change from 6 p.m. to 4 p.m. Friday afternoons will always be reserved for appointments.

Questions regarding the Tax Center or tax preparation in general should be directed to the Tax Center reception desk at 449-7401.



Sgt. Juan Vara

Col. Stephen L. Forand, Station commanding officer, briefs Brig. Gen. Robert C. Dickerson, commanding general of Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, on the new air traffic control tower here while touring the Station on Thursday.

Leaving the Corps: Marines, Sailors learn transition skills

Sgt. Arthur Stone
correspondent

Senior Marines and Sailors preparing to retire from the Corps this year got a wake-up call Jan. 12 during a free transition support workshop, "Marketing Yourself for a Second Career," presented by the Military Officers Association of America at the Family Services Center here.

Twenty-nine-year Army veteran Col. Jerry Crews, a transition specialist with the MOAA, spoke to the officers and senior staff noncommissioned officers bluntly during his opening statements.

"Stay in!" Crews admonished the workshop attendees, "It's the best career and the most fun you will ever have."

Crews, a Vietnam veteran and former Airborne Ranger (Special Operations) ran reconnaissance patrols out of KheSan and served alongside Marines of the 26th Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, during the Vietnam War.

He spoke affectionately of his time in the military to the prospective retirees, but for those planning on getting out, Crews recommended they begin their transition up to two years prior to their retirement by reading several transition books, preparing themselves and their family members, collecting information and networking with friends and family members working in the civilian job market.

He told the attendees from the very beginning that his intent during the workshop was to "scare them, make them angry and get them focused." Crews has served nine years with the Military Officers Association of America as a transition lecturer. As a retiree, he has been where his audience is and made the same career transition for which they are preparing. He said his goal now is to ensure that

other retirees and their spouses make the right decisions and start thinking about life after the military.

"Just because you were a success in the Corps doesn't mean you will be a success out in the civilian world," Crews warned his audience. "No one is going to hire someone off the street when they can hire someone from within their company who has already been tried and tested. They will hire a friend over a qualified applicant."

Crews addressed issues they would face when looking for a new career after the military. He spoke about job competition in the civilian sector, perceptions employers have of former military personnel, job searching, resumes and how employers view them, networking tips, interviews and how to deal with rejection.

During the workshop, the attendees received a free booklet, Marketing Yourself for a Second Career, which was designed to guide them in the transition process, widen their knowledge and outline goals.

"Most people will take a job for considerable less pay than they made in the military," Crews said.

"You will be a success if you do not chase money, but chase life. There are more important things in life than increasing its speed. If you have your physical health, there is nothing more important than that."

"I felt the seminar is one of the first of many steps in a servicemember's preparation to exit the service," said Chief Warrant Officer Rawley H. Coleman, personnel officer, Installation Personnel Administrative Center, who attended the workshop in preparation for retirement. "The seminar certainly was a reality check - not watered down. Servicemembers need to hear the truth, so they can make the necessary adjustments in a timely manner. Unfortunately, too many servicemembers wait until the last minute to begin the planning process."

Anyone interested in transition support services, workshops and other career management information, should contact Gerry Malpass, Career Resource Office manager, or Timm Downey, Transition Assistance Program coordinator, at the Station Family Services Center, building AS-90, or via phone at 449-6110/6185.



Sgt. Arthur Stone

Retired Army Col. Jerry Crews, transition specialist for the Military Officers Association of America, speaks to future retirees at a transition support workshop, "Marketing Yourself for a Second Career," Jan. 12 at the Family Services Center.

Station dining facility gets a breath of fresh air



Lance Cpl. Zachary R. Frank

The eating area outside the dining facility is available for anyone who wants to eat in the fresh air.

Cpl. Wayne Campbell
correspondent

The chance to go somewhere relaxing to eat chow may not come around very often in the Marine Corps, especially for those who live in the barracks and have a meal card.

The Station dining facility is trying to change things by building an outside eating area for its patrons.

Lt. Col. Craig B. Herold, who was the Station S-4 officer until he retired in December, wanted an enjoyable eating environment for servicemembers aboard New River, according to Master Sgt. Tyrone B. Hill, Station food service military liaison.

"Marines are already pumped up about it," said Hill. "They enjoy sitting out in the fresh air and being able to

smoke while they eat. It lets the Marines relax and it makes life easier for them."

The café has three nearby grills Marines may use at any time to cook their own food.

"The Marines can bring their family and friends, and have a good place to have a cookout," said Hill. "Shops around the Air Station are welcome to have shop parties or cookouts here."

All the details for use of the area have not yet been established for the patio due to new contracts being written to facilitate the civilian employees at the dining facility.

"The civilians are being very supportive in our effort to improve the facilities here," commented Hill.

To help keep the area clean, trays from the dining facility are not allowed

in the area, but the Marines are welcome to get a bagged meal and take it out, according to Hill.

"We haven't had too many people eating out here recently due to the weather, but when it starts warming up, I think the Marines will be using it more," said Hill. "During the summer there will be umbrellas placed at every table to help shade the Marines while they enjoy the fresh air."

Unfortunately, one of the lights for the café has already been broken due to misuse, and dining facility personnel ask for the Marines to act professionally while using the area to prevent any more mishaps.

For more information on reserving the outdoor eating area contact John Negron at 449-6807 or Master Sgt. Tyrone B. Hill at 449-6716.

Courts- Martial

A lance corporal from Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-162 was found guilty at a special court-martial Jan. 6 for one specification of violation of Article 86 (unauthorized absence) and one specification of Article 112a (wrongful use of methamphetamine).

Punishment: Bad conduct discharge, confinement for 60 days, forfeiture of two-thirds pay while confined and reduction to E-1.

A sergeant from Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-26 was found guilty at a special court-martial Jan. 14 for one specification of violation of Article 92 (failure to obey a lawful general order), three specifications of Article 112a (wrongful use of marijuana, cocaine and possession of marijuana), and one specification of Article 107 (false official statement).

Punishment: Bad conduct discharge, confinement for 90 days, forfeiture of \$700 pay per month for three months and reduction to E-1.

A lance corporal from Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-29 was found guilty at a special-court martial Jan. 14 for one specification of violation of Article 107 (false official statement) and one specification of Article 112a (wrongful use of marijuana).

Punishment: Confinement for 30 days, forfeiture of \$600 pay per month for one month and reduction to E-1.

H&HS Marine and NCO of the Year



Lance Cpl. Zachary R. Frank

Cpl. Joseph J. Rodriguez and Sgt. Larry W. Parker, seated, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron Marine of the Year and Noncommissioned Officer of the Year respectively, pose with Station personnel and prominent citizens who attended a breakfast in their honor. Second row from left to right are Lt. Col. Timothy W. Fitzgerald, H&HS commanding officer, Sgt. Maj. Darren Simms, H&HS sergeant major, Sgt. Maj. Lewis L. Summerville, Station sergeant major, Judy Pitchford, Maria Stemple, Peter Gant, Virgil Dwyer and Randy Sisson. Back row from left to right are Stan Fitzgerald, Joe Houle, Michael Rooney and Joe Gentelia.

AIRFIELD

from page 4

Operations is weather. Approximately 17 Marines are loaned to Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron as well, and operate daily giving forecasts and briefs to the pilots.

"The jobs here include the officer-in-charge; observers who record and disseminate information on what the weather is doing at various times of the day; forecasters who provide the forecast and brief the pilots; and technicians who make sure the equipment is operational at all times," said Chief Warrant Officer Ann E. Lassiter, officer-in-charge and native of Opelika, Ala.

The weather Marines' jobs are totally different in the field than in garrison, according to Lassiter.

"In garrison we use the equipment (weather balloons, etc.), but in the field, we use a meteorological mobile facility replacement van. We get the same information from it," she said.

Combined, these sections make up one of the most important divisions to deployed squadrons.

According to McCabe, the Marines here recently returned from Kuwait where they supported coalition aircraft, Army aircraft and KC-130s. There they were assigned to three different bases: Ah Med Aljabar, Ali Al Saleem and Jofas, which was the first expedient airfield since the Korean War.



Sgt. Juan Vara

Lance Cpl. Nick A. Magliocca, a refueler operator with the Airfield Operations Division of Marine Wing Support Squadron-272 and Charlotte, N.C., native, retrieves the grounding cables from his refueler truck Monday prior to recirculating the fuel to ensure it is clean.

A century of service



Sgt. Juan Vara

Sandi Isherwood, president of the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society, and Sharon Zacharias, NMCRS secretary, cut a piece of cake to be passed on to Jean Hawley, first executive director of the NMCRS office here in April of 1964. The society had their 100th birthday celebration Friday at the Officers' Club.

Civilians get pinned for years of service



Cpl. Wayne Campbell

Col. Stephen L. Forand, Station commanding officer, stands with New River civilian employess Doug Jordan, Floyd Parker, Dennis Derosier, Dennis Riley, Daryl Brown, Alton Hill, Randy Brown, Bonnie Gurganus and Mary Wheat after presenting them each a pin for serving more than 30 years. The ceremony was held last Thursday at the Officers' Club to honor all civilian employees who work on New River. The civilians aboard the Station have a combined 1,862 years of service, which is an average of 14 years per employee.

22nd MEU designated 'Special Operations Capable'



Cpl. Robert A. Sturkie

A CH-53E Super Stallion from Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-266 (Reinforced), the aviation combat element of the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit, sits on the flight deck of the USS Wasp as an equipment-laden landing craft air-cushion approaches the ship's well deck. The Wasp is unloading the 22nd MEU's personnel and equipment for the unit's Special Operations Capable Exercise (SOCEX).

Gunnery Sgt. Kieth A. Milks
correspondent

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP LEJUENE, N.C. -- Months of hard work culminated in the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) receiving its 'Special Operations Capable (SOC)' designation Jan. 23.

The long and difficult journey began in August when the MEU, commanded by Col. Kenneth F. McKenzie Jr., assumed operational control of its major subordinate elements: Battalion Landing Team 1st Bn., 6th Marines, Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 266 (Reinforced), and MEU Service Support Group 22.

Evaluators from the II Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) followed the MEU's five-month progression through combat courses, three at-sea training exercises, urban combat training in South Carolina, and most recently, its SOC Exercise (SOCEX) in January.

The SOC program was begun in

1985 when the Marine Corps established a standardized training and evaluation program for all outbound MEUs.

"Today marks the end of our dedicated training phase," said McKenzie in an address to key staff members from throughout the MEU. "The entire MEU has met my commander's intent to this point, and we're ready to deploy. As of today, our focus is to prepare for combat operations."

The unit's mid-February embarkation aboard the amphibious assault ships Wasp, Whidbey Island and Shreveport will mark the 19th time the unit has sailed forth into harm's way.

"We've been working really hard so it's a huge relief that the pre-deployment training is over," said Lance Cpl. Jeremiah Braudrick of Kingston, Ohio, a mortarman with weapons company BLT 1/6. "We're all excited and ready to get on ship next month and get in the fight."

For more information on the status of the 22nd MEU, visit the unit's Web site at www.22meu.usmc.mil.



Sgt. Juan Vara

Mustangs show appreciation

Pete Tallman Sr., president of the Tarheel Mustang Chapter of the Marine Corps Mustang Association, presents Col. Stephen L. Forand, Station commanding officer, with a plaque Jan. 21 at the Station Officers' Club, surrounded by Robert E. Armel, New River Marine Corps Community Services director of food and hospitality, Wanda M. Colwell, MCCS clubs' manager, Jerry Brown, second vice president of the Tarheel Mustang Chapter, and Jack McGraw, Tarheel Mustang Chapter secretary . The plaque is a token of appreciation to the Station for allowing the members of the chapter to have their meetings and Marine Corps birthday celebrations here and honors past, present and future Marine 'Mustangs' who have gallantly served their country in the officer and enlisted ranks. It will be displayed in the bar of the Officers' Club.



Sgt. Juan Vara

'Warriors' from Marine Light/Attack Helicopter Squadron-167 load some of their necessary gear onto a CH-53E Super Stallion from Marine Helicopter Training Squadron-302 to be transported to the USS Bataan.

New River units support OIF 2

Sgt. Juan Vara
correspondent

Hundreds of Marines and Sailors from several squadrons here left on Jan. 21 heading for Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 2.

The "Raging Bulls" of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-261, along with a small number of "Warriors" from Marine Light/Attack Helicopter Squadron-167 and some "Patriots" from Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-26 flew to Onslow Beach, N.C., to board USS Bataan, which will transport them to the Middle East.

"I'm excited," said Cpl. Franklin Lewis, a CH-46E mechanic assigned to HMM-261, when asked about his reaction to taking part in the operation. "We train for combat. When we don't get to go we feel like we don't have a job."

Lewis said the "Raging Bulls" have been working at a fast tempo, trying to get everything accomplished in record time, while preparing themselves for the deployment.

"If anybody is ready to go to combat it's us," he said. James Anderson was one of the family members who came to see their loved ones depart. He traveled from Greenville, S.C., to see his older brother, Pfc. Joseph L. Anderson, individual material readiness list clerk with MALS-26, board a CH-53E Super Stallion from Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron-461 and depart.

"I feel he's going to be safe," said James. "He's ready to go, he's focused, he knows what he's doing, and I know he'll be back ... all of them are coming back."

Although the "Warriors" flew out their aircraft and some maintainers, the rest of the Marines and Sailors in the squadron will be meeting up with those aboard USS Bataan at a later

date.

Gunnery Sgt. Thomas A. Stone, HML/A-167 maintenance control chief, said that when this happens, it would be the first time since the Vietnam War that the squadron deployed as a whole.

"A lot of these guys volunteered to go back," said Stone. "Some of us just got back with the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit. We also have guys who went to OIF and are going back. All of the guys are exited about going."

According to Gunnery Sgt. Michael P. Warren, HML/A-167 maintenance control chief, supporting OIF 2 gives the Marines in the squadron a chance to "write the next chapter in the history books."

"All the Marines are up to date on their training and are prepared to handle any situations that might arise," said Warren.

All involved squadrons have spent some time aboard MCAS Yuma, Ariz., training in a desert environment. The squadrons took part in Operation Diamond Thrust 2003 conducted last April; Operation Striking Hawk 2003 last August; and some of their members took part in Operation Desert Talon, an exercise designed specifically to train aviation units going to Iraq.

"We had a real short time to get this ready to go," said 1st Lt. Michael D. McGurren, CH-46E pilot and embark officer assigned to HMM-261. "The Marines at I and II Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Aircraft Group-16 and -26, the 'Ironhorse' of Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron-461, the 'Phoenix' of Marine Helicopter Training Squadron-302, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-26 and Marine Wing Support Squadron-272 have been providing outstanding support getting us out of here."



Sgt. Juan Vara

UH-1N Hueys from Marine Light/Attack Helicopter Squadron-167 hover over the New River flightline on their way to the USS Bataan. HML/A-167 is one of the New River squadrons supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom 2.



Sgt. Juan Vara

Staff Sgt. Jason R. Rice, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-26 ground support equipment technician, hauls his gear to the helicopters.



Sgt. Juan Vara

Marines attached to Marine Light/Attack Helicopter Squadron-167 board a CH-53E from Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron-461 for transport to the USS Bataan while deploying in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 2.



Sgt. Juan Vara

Marines from Marine Light/Attack Helicopter Squadron-167 load their gear onto a CH-53E to be transported to the USS Bataan on Jan. 21. The Marines are deploying in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 2.

Get on schedule with the Station Theater

Free admission with military identification

The snack bar opens 30 minutes before the first movie and closes 45 minutes after the last movie begins.

Movie times are subject to change.
For more information, call the Station Theater at 449-6292 or 449-6528.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Rating</u>	<u>Run time</u>
Wed. 28 Jan.	9 a.m.	The Missing	R	137 min.
	7 p.m.	Timeline	PG-13	116 min.
Fri. 30 Jan.	7 p.m.	Honey	PG-13	94 min.
	9:30 p.m.	Veronica Guerin	R	98 min.
Sat. 31 Jan.	7 p.m.	Honey	PG-13	94 min.
	9:30 p.m.	The Missing	R	137 min.
Sun. 1 Feb.	3 p.m.	Honey	PG-13	94 min.
Mon. 2 Feb.	7 p.m.	Veronica Guerin	R	98 min.

The differences between winners and losers

Cmdr. Henry W. Hensley
station chaplain

During the past few weeks we have been inundated with a variety of sports happenings. The NCAA Bowls, the NFL playoffs, college basketball and the list goes on.

We all recognize that there is, in every athletic contest, a winner and a loser. A few years ago there was a book written on the subject. In it the author points out some of the differences between winners and losers. Let me point out some of the differences.

When a winner makes a mistake, he says, "I was wrong." When a loser makes a mistake, he says, "It wasn't my fault." A winner respects those who are superior to him and tries to learn something from them; a loser resents those who are superior to him and tries to find fault in others.

A winner takes a big problem and separates it into small parts that can be more easily manipulated; a loser takes many little problems and rolls them together until they are unsolvable.

A loser becomes bitter when he is behind and careless when he is ahead; a winner, no matter what position he finds himself in keeps his equilibrium. Life is a game to be played, a race to be run, a battle to be fought. The Apostle Paul spoke of these things many times. There are, in life, winners and

losers.

God has planted in all of us the instinct to be winners. Psychologists tell us that one of our strongest urges is to excel, to be achievers, to overcome difficulty and become the master of whatever situation we face. This is one of our fundamental human characteristics, the drive and desire to be a winner, to be successful, to achieve great things.

But what happens when we fail? How should we deal with that?

Three observations.

First, beware of a false sense of failure. Be sure that you have failed before you tell yourself and others that you have fallen short. I have observed that many times we think we have failed when in fact we have not. Often times we compare ourselves to the wrong people.

An example might be a high school basketball star, an all-stater, a real star and the hottest thing in high school basketball.

If he were to compare himself with an NBA all-star, he might think of himself as a failure. Let us be certain that we don't use the wrong ideal for comparison.

A second observation; when and if we do fail, let us face up to those failures. When we fall short we have to assume the responsibility for the failure. And a last observation; our failures are relative to our perspective.

There is an old Icelandic tale about a fisherman and his two sons who were in their boat on their regular fishing run when a terrible storm blew up on the North Atlantic. The winds were so strong and the waves so high that they all but swallowed up their little boat. They eventually lost all sense of direction.

In the meantime, on the shore, the strong winds had blown into the kitchen fire in the fisherman's hut and had blown a spark out onto the floor and set the hut ablaze. The fisherman's wife tried to put out the fire, but the house was consumed. When the boat finally made it back to shore the wife met her husband and sons with tear filled eyes.

She cried out in agony that their home was destroyed.

The fisherman seemed unmoved and said nothing. She said again, "Didn't you hear me? We have lost everything."

Then he said to her, "Let me tell you what has happened to us. While we were out at sea the storm blew up and we were lost, we didn't know which way to go, the winds were so strong and the waves so high. We had totally lost our bearings. Then on the horizon we saw a bright light, a beacon. We began to pull toward that light, it was a fire, it was our home burning. Your husband and sons were saved because of that fire."

It might only be a matter of perspective.

Family Services Center

Pre-Separation Brief

Feb. 11
7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
This mandated brief covers all required information for the service member and spouse separating from the military way of life. Pre-registration is mandatory through your Unit Transition Counselor

Making Every \$ Count

Feb. 12
1 - 2:30 p.m.
Personal assistance is available for the person who manages the "books" in your home. Find out more about reducing monthly expenses, food shopping, common consumer mistakes and budgeting strategies.

Effects of Divorce on Children

Feb. 17
1 - 4 p.m.
This is a two-part, four-hour workshop that focuses initially on the possible impact of divorce on children when they are coping with the painful and agonizing breakup of

their family. Topics of discussion include typical reactions of children of different ages, things children need to know and hear, tips for single parenting again and what both parents can do to help their children deal with and adjust to the losses and changes involved.

Transition Assistance Program

Feb. 18 - 19
8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
This is a 2-day career options workshop, which helps you assess your knowledge, skills and abilities and apply your military acquired skills in the civilian employment sector. Pre-registration required through your unit transition counselor.

AA Meetings

Each Monday
11:50 a.m. - 12:50 p.m.
FSC now has Alcoholic Anonymous meetings every Monday. These meetings are open to alcoholics and non-alcoholics.

Retired Affairs

Each Wednesday and Friday
8 a.m. - 12 p.m.
The retired affairs representative can provide retired servicemembers and their spouses with information regarding benefits, entitlements, privileges and legal assistance. No appointments necessary.

Keystone Meetings for Teens

Each 1st and 3rd Friday
6 - 7 p.m.
This is a Boys and Girls Club Program that offers an opportunity to gain leadership skills, participate in and earn community service hours as well as social activities. Go and voice suggestions and plan events. On the 3rd Friday of each month, a teen-prevention topic is presented.

Play Morning

Each Thursday
9:30 - 11 a.m.
Youth Community Center
Play morning is a time for mom and dad to have fun with their children

age six and under. Pre-registration is required. For more information, please call the New Parent Support Program at 450-1540.

Power Hour

Every Afternoon
4 - 5 p.m.
This is an education program implemented by the Boys and Girls Clubs of America to help students excel in school. Power Hour means that every day after school, members will have a special place that is quiet and private to do their homework. Someone will be on hand to help members who have questions or need help understanding their homework. Tutoring will also be available and can be scheduled on a weekly or daily basis.

For more information about programs or to pre-register for one of the classes, please call 449-6110/6185 or visit the Web site at <http://www.lejeune.usmc.mil/mcas-nr/fsc/fschome.htm>.

Training helps Marines save lives during Djibouti bombing accident

Cpl. Wayne Campbell
correspondent

Marines train hard from the time they step on the yellow footprints in boot camp until they leave the Marine Corps.

Many Marines may never see the reasoning behind all the hard work and long hours of training for something that may never happen, but some do, such as the Marines and Sailors assigned to Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron-461 during the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa in Djibouti from April to September 2003.

When the Marines awoke in the early morning of June 22, 2003, to participate in a supporting training exercise (SATEX) at Godoria Range, approximately 60 miles north of Camp Lemonier, they did not realize that their Marine Corps training was going to be put to the test.

"The exercise was in the middle of the hamsi season," said Maj. Sean M. Salene, director of safety and standardization for HMH-461, also the senior squadron officer present at Godoria Range. "The hamsi is a 50-day period in Djibouti where the high winds come off the land instead of the ocean, so the weather was very hot and over-cast."

The three CH-53Es and 23 squadron personnel were scheduled as the medical evacuation stand-by for the evolution, and the helicopters and crew were positioned near the range observation post.

"Most of the Marines were sitting in the aircraft or in the shade of the aircraft to escape the 119 degree heat," explained Salene.

According to Salene, the mortars had finished putting their rounds down range when the Air Force B-52s were called in to drop laser-guided bombs on their targets.

"The B-52s were scheduled to do a dry pass over the range, then circle around for the hot pass," said Salene.

According to Salene, he was near the observation post overlooking the targets when he heard a loud crack behind him.

The crack he heard was nine bombs impacting the area where the helicopters were positioned.

"I turned around and saw what had happened and my first thought was my crew," said Salene.

Sgt. Richard A. Dorsett, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-26 aircraft ordnance systems technician, was sitting near the observation post listening to the aircraft being called in over the radio when he began to get up from his seat, but was knocked to the

lava rock by a blast.

"I got up off the ground and saw the aircraft on fire," said Dorsett. "All the Marines around jumped up and immediately ran to the aircraft to pull the injured to safety."

As Salene ran the distance from the observation post to the aircraft he began stripping off his weapon, helmet and body armor to gain speed any way he could.

"I could hear the screams of the injured," said Salene. "I could feel the immense heat from the fire. It was like a dream where no matter how hard I tried I just couldn't run fast enough."

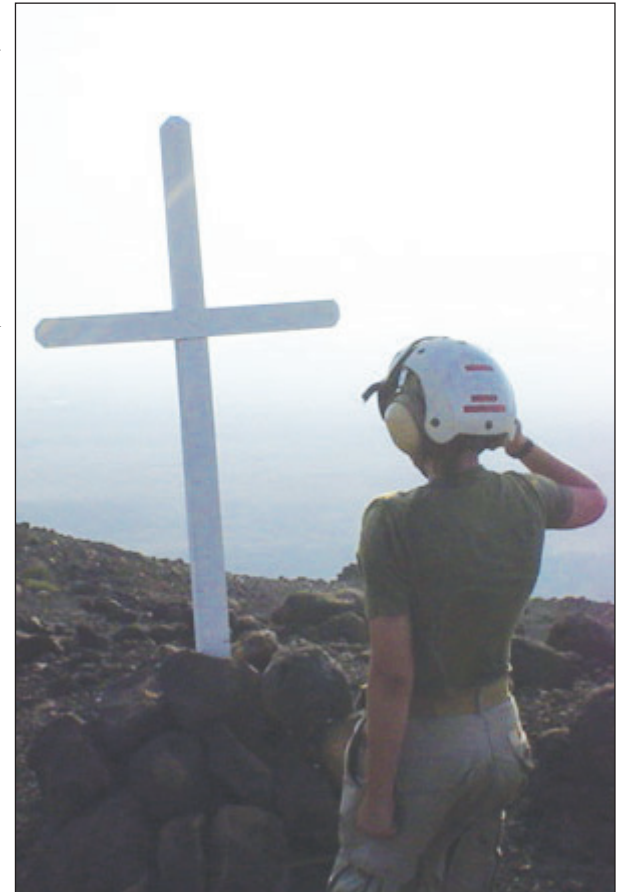
Despite personal injuries, the Marines were pulling the more severely injured to a casualty collection point, when they realized Lt. Eric E. Netland, squadron flight surgeon, was severely injured and unable to provide medical assistance. His medical bag was also destroyed from the blast.

"We were trying to keep Lieutenant Netland awake but he was losing a lot of blood," said Dorsett. "When he would regain consciousness he would tell us how to treat the injuries of the other Marines."

Dorsett, recalling that there was approximately 5,000 armor piercing incendiary .50 caliber rounds on the aircraft, began yelling for everybody to take cover. He knew that the ammunition would heat up and begin firing, posing another threat to the Marines.

According to Dorsett, despite the .50 caliber rounds impacting the area, the Marines did not hesitate to put themselves in danger to assist their fellow Marines and render first aid.

"Despite the Marines having little medical equipment and training, they did everything they were supposed to," said Salene. "They used T-shirts and blouses as bandages to protect burn victims from the sun and used belts as tourniquets, like they were trained in boot camp. They recalled their first aid training."



courtesy photo

Lance Cpl. Rebecca R. Mullins, Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron-461 maintenance administration clerk, salutes a cross placed on top of the hill where the bombing accident occurred. The cross was placed there as a constant reminder of the loss the Marine Corps endured June 22, 2003.

When the medical evacuation helicopters arrived approximately one hour later, the Marines covered the wounded with their bodies to help protect them from the debris kicked up from the rotor blades, according to Salene.

Salene recalls looking at all the tired, sweaty and bloody faces of the young Marines on the 25 minute ride back to Camp Lemonier, and was moved by their courage and bravery.

Salene attributes the Marines' ability to stay calm during the situation to the leadership training the Marine Corps instills into every Marine.

"The Marines did not require any direction, they did not panic and took initiative without hesitation, regardless of rank," said Salene. "It is one thing to watch this kind of situation on TV, but when you see your friend with that kind of trauma it can be shocking. I couldn't ask for anything more than what they did."



courtesy photo

Marines attached to Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron-461 run to the aid of injured Marines after a bombing accident in Djibouti on June 22, 2003. The accident left one dead and eight injured.

LCTV-10 schedule



<u>Time</u>	<u>Show</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Show</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Show</u>
7:30 a.m.	Loras College	2:30 p.m.	Loras College	10 p.m.	Loras College
8 a.m.	The Morning Report	3 p.m.	Your Corps	11 p.m.	Navy/Marine Corps News
8:30 a.m.	Happenings	3:30 p.m.	Navy/Marine Corps News	11:30 p.m.	The Morning Report
9 a.m.	Your Corps	4 p.m.	Army News Watch	12 a.m.	Army News Watch
9:30 a.m.	The Aurora Fossil Museum	4:30 p.m.	What Price Iwo	12:30 a.m.	Armed Forces News
10 a.m.	Reality Check	5 p.m.	The Aurora Fossil Museum	2 a.m.	The Aurora Fossil Museum
10:30 a.m.	Armed Forces News	5:30 p.m.	The Morning Report	3 a.m.	The Morning Report
12 p.m.	The Morning Report	6 p.m.	Happenings	3:30 a.m.	Navy/Marine Corps News
12:30 p.m.	Happenings	6:30 p.m.	Reality Check	4 a.m.	Reality Check
1 p.m.	Navy/Marine Corps News	7:30 p.m.	The Morning Report	5 a.m.	What Price Iwo
1:30 p.m.	USMC Officer Promotion	8 p.m.	Armed Forces News	5:30 a.m.	The Morning Report
2 p.m.	What Price Iwo	9:30 p.m.	USMC Officer Promotion	6 a.m.	USMC Officer Promotion

Marine Corps Ace, Joe Foss

story from
<http://www.acepilots.com>

Joe Foss was born in 1915 to a Norwegian-Scots family in South Dakota. He learned hunting and marksmanship at a young age. Like millions of others, 11-year-old Joe Foss was inspired by Charles Lindbergh, especially after he saw Lindbergh at an airport near Sioux Falls, S.D. Five years later he watched a Marine squadron put on a dazzling exhibition led by Capt. Clayton Jerome, future wartime Director of Marine Corps Aviation.

In 1934, Foss began his college education in Sioux Falls, but he had to drop out to help his mother run the family farm. However, he scraped up \$65 for private flying lessons. Five years later he entered the University of South Dakota again and supported himself by waiting on tables. In his senior year, he also completed a civilian pilot training program before he graduated with a business degree in 1940.

Upon graduation, he enlisted in the Marine Corps reserves as an aviation cadet. Seven months later, he earned his aviator wings at Pensacola, Fla., and was commissioned a second lieutenant. For the next nine months he was a 'plowback' flight instructor. He was at Pensacola when the news of Pearl Harbor broke, and since he was the officer of the day, he was placed in charge of base security. Thus he prepared to defend Pensacola from Japanese invaders, riding around the perimeter on a bicycle.

In the Pacific

On the morning of Oct. 9, Foss was catapulted off the decks, in his only combat carrier mission. Landing at Henderson Field, he was told that his fighters were now based at the 'cow pasture.' He was impressed with the 'make-do' character of the 'Cactus Air Force.'

The airfield was riddled with bomb craters and wrecked aircraft, but also featured three batteries of 90 mm anti-aircraft guns and two radar stations. As XO of Marine Fighter Squadron-121, he would normally lead a flight of two four-plane divisions, whenever there were enough F-4F Wildcats to go around. He was the oldest pilot in the flight, four years older than the average age of 23. The flight would become known as 'Foss' Flying Circus' and rack up more than 60 victories. Five of them would become aces; two would die in the fight for Guadalcanal.

On Oct. 13, 1942, VMF-121 scored

its first victories when Lts. Freeman and Narr each got a Japanese plane. Later that same day, Foss led a dozen Wildcats to intercept 32 enemy bombers and fighters. In his first combat, an A6M Zero bounced Foss, but overshot, and Foss was able to fire a good burst and claim one destroyed aircraft.

Instantly, three more Zeros set upon him, and he barely made it back to 'Fighter One', his Wildcat dripping oil.

Chastened by the experience, he declared, "You can call me 'Swivel-Neck Joe' from now on." From the first day, Foss followed the tactics of Lt. Col. Joe Bauer: getting in close, so close that another pilot joked that the XO left powder burns on his targets. The next day while intercepting a flight of enemy bombers, Foss' engine acted up and he took cover in the clouds. But suddenly a Wildcat whizzed past him, tailed by a Zero. Foss cut loose and shot the Zero's wing off. It was his second victory in two days.

While the Wildcats' primary responsibility was air defense, they also strafed Japanese infantry and ships when they had enough ammunition. Foss led one such mission on Oct. 16. Mid-October was the low point for the Americans in the struggle for Guadalcanal. Japanese warships shelled the U.S. positions nightly, with special attention to the airstrips. To avoid the shelling, some fliers slept in the front lines. Foss grew to appreciate the Navy's fighter doctrine and found that the "Thach Weave" effectively countered the Zero's superior performance, because "it allowed us to point eyes and guns in every direction."

Foss was leading an interception on the morning of Oct. 18 when the Zero top cover pounced on them and downed an F-4F. But Foss was able to get above them and flamed the nearest, hit another and briefly engaged a third. Gaining an angle, he finally shot up the third plane's engine. Next he found a group of G4M Betties already under attack by Fighting Squadron-71. He executed a firing pass from above, flashed through the enemy bombers, and pulled up sharply, blasting one from below. Nine days at Guadalcanal and he was an ace.

Two days later Bauer and Foss led a flight of Wildcats on the morning intercept. In the dog-fighting, Foss downed two Zeros, but took a hit in his engine. He landed safely at Henderson Field with a bad cut on his head, but otherwise unharmed.

On Oct. 23, there were plenty of targets and Foss soon exploded a Zero.

He went after another, which tried to twist away in a looping maneuver. Foss followed and opened up while inverted at the top of his loop. He caught the Zero and flamed it. He later described it as a lucky shot. Next he spotted a Japanese pilot doing a slow roll; he fired as the Zero's wing, rolled through the vertical and saw the enemy pilot blown out of the cockpit, minus a parachute. Suddenly he was alone and two Zeros hit him, but his rugged Wildcat absorbed the damage, permitting Foss to flame one of his assailants.

Once again, he nursed a damaged fighter back to Guadalcanal. So far he had destroyed eleven enemy planes, but had brought back four Wildcats that were too damaged to fly again.

October 25 was the day that the Japanese planned to occupy Henderson Field; they sent their fighters over, with orders to circle until the airstrip was theirs. It didn't work out that way, as the U.S. ground forces held their lines and 'Cactus' did its part. Foss led six Wildcats up before 10 a.m. and claimed two of the three kills on that sortie. In a mission on Oct. 25, he downed three more, to become the Marine Corps' first 'ace in a day.' He had achieved 14 victories in only 13 days.

The next day, a PBY Catalina, piloted by Maj. Jack Cram rescued him. On his return to Guadalcanal, he learned that 'Cactus' had downed 15 Japanese planes in the previous day's air battle. His own tally stood at 19. On Nov. 9, Adm. Bull Halsey pinned the Distinguished Flying Cross on him and two other pilots.

November

The Americans were bringing four transports full of infantry to Guadalcanal on Nov. 12. The Japanese sent 16 Betty bombers and 30 covering Zeros after them, while the American Wildcats and P-39 Airacobras defended. Foss and his Wildcats were flying top cover close air patrols and dived headlong into the attackers, right down onto the deck, as Barrett Tillman described it in "Wildcat Aces of World War II."

Ignoring the peril, Foss hauled into within 100 yards of the nearest bomber and aimed at the starboard engine, which spouted flame. The Betty tried a water landing, caught a wingtip and tumbled into oblivion. Foss set his sight on another Betty when a Zero intervened. The Wildcat nosed up briefly and fired a beautifully aimed snapshot, which sent the Zero spearing into the water. He then resumed the chase.

Foss caught up with the next Betty in line and made a deflection shot into its wingroot; the bomber flamed up and then set down in the water. The massive dogfight continued, until Foss ran out of fuel and ammunition.

Late afternoon on the 13th, Bauer, tired of being stuck on the ground at Fighter Command, went up with Foss to take a look. It was his last flight, described by Foss in a letter to Bauer's family. No trace of 'Indian Joe' was ever found. Back at Guadalcanal, Foss was diagnosed with malaria. Two great leaders of Cactus Fighter Command were gone, although Foss would return in six weeks.

January

Foss returned to combat flying on Jan. 15 when he shot down three more planes to bring his total to 26.

He flew his last mission ten days later when his flight and four P-38 Lightnings intercepted a force of more than 60 Zeros and D3A2 Type 99 Vals. Quickly analyzing the situation, he ordered his flight to stay high. This made his small flight look like a decoy to the Japanese. Soon Cactus scrambled more fighters and the Japanese planes fled. It was ironic that in Foss' most satisfying mission, he didn't fire a shot.

A few months later, he went to Washington, D.C., to be decorated for his 26 aerial victories that equaled Eddie Rickenbacker's World War I record.

In May 1943, President Roosevelt presented him with the Medal of Honor for outstanding heroism above and beyond the call of duty.



photo courtesy of <http://phoenix.about.com>